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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY
INFO RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC
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DEPARTMENT FOR WHA/CAR, M/PRI; US SOUTHCOM

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: KSEP AMGT AODE ABLD ASEC NA NL

SUBJECT: ANSWER TO NSDD-38 - REDUCTION IN DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE AGENCY STAFFING IN CURACAO, NETHERLANDS ANTILLES

REF: 07 STATE 003695, 03 CURACAO 000652, 02 STATE 142662

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED

¶1. Chief of Mission disapproves Ref. A proposal to abolish the Defense Liaison Officer (DLO) position in Curacao. His decision is based on three important reasons:

A) A previous COM identified several policy and administrative factors justifying the approval of this DLO position as recently as 2003 (Ref. B). This justification is even more valid today. USG interest in Venezuelan activity in the region has grown, USAF Forward Operating Location (FOL) counter-drug activity has increased, and military ship visits are more frequent and sensitive. Retention and filling of this position are consistent with our Strategic Plan (MSP), and no other currently assigned position could fill the gap. Retaining this position also makes sense from a cost perspective. The ICASS assessment for FY 08 has already been programmed, and the position is now listed in the CSCS as "not co-located at post". (The position is located at a Dutch military base at no cost to the DoD). Therefore, no additional funding will be needed until FY 09, which allows the DoD up to eight months to identify an officer for assignment.

B) Mission questions whether Ref. A is a correct use of the NSDD-38 process. As we understand it, that process is generally used to determine whether the position is needed and justified, an issue already decided in 2003. The question now simply is how to fill that need, which is not an NSDD-38 determination. We do not believe it would be reasonable to abolish a recently justified NSDD-38 position now, and then have to attempt to justify it again under similar circumstances once DoD is able to fill it.

C) Finally, we strongly believe that limited, short-term TDY visits will not/not provide the necessary support outlined in Ref. B's original NSDD-38 approval.

¶2. We hope that the DoD will reconsider this request, and proceed with the assignment process to place a DLO officer in Curacao. Please direct any questions and/or comments to Don Feeney, Management Officer, at IVG 301-985-9484, international 5999-461-3066, ext. 244, or e-mail at FeeneyD@state.gov.

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